

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions of claims in the application.

Claims 1-15 (cancelled)

16. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for driving and steering a vehicle comprising:

a first transmission drivingly interposed between a prime mover and a pair of left and right drive wheels so as to drive said pair of left and right drive wheels in the same direction;

a reversing operation device operatively connected to said first transmission so as to switch an output rotational direction of said first transmission between opposite directions, thereby setting either a forward or a backward driving direction of said pair of left and right drive wheels;

a second transmission drivingly interposed between said prime mover and said pair of left and right drive wheels so as to differentially drive said pair of left and right drive wheels; and

a steering operation device which is shiftable in either a left turning range between a straight traveling position and a full left turning position or a right turning range between said straight traveling position and a full right turning position, said steering operation device being operatively connected to said second transmission so as to steplessly increase output rotational speed of said second transmission during the shift of said steering operation device in either said left or right turning range from said straight traveling position toward said full left or right turning position, wherein the

increase of output rotation speed of said second transmission is gradual at an early period of the shift of said steering operation device from said straight traveling position to said full left or right turning position, wherein the increase of output rotation speed of said second transmission is steep at a late period of the shift of said steering operation device from said straight traveling position to said full left or right turning position, and wherein said reversing operation device is also operatively connected to said second transmission so as to switch an output rotational direction of said second transmission between opposite directions.

17. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as set forth in claim 16, wherein said reversing operation device is a pedal.

18. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as set forth in claim 16, wherein said reversing operation device is a handle.

19. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for driving and steering a vehicle, comprising:

a transmission for traveling drivingly interposed between a prime mover and a pair of left and right drive wheels so as to drive said pair of left and right drive wheels in the same direction;

a reversing operation device operatively connected to said transmission for traveling so as to switch an output rotational direction of said transmission for traveling between opposite directions, thereby setting either a forward or a backward driving direction of said pair of left and right drive wheels;

a hydrostatic transmission for steering drivingly interposed between said prime mover and said pair of left and right drive wheels so as to differentially drive said pair of left and right drive wheels, said hydrostatic transmission for steering including a variable displacement hydraulic pump and a variable displacement hydraulic motor fluidly connected to each other; and

a steering operation device which is shiftable in either a left turning range between a straight traveling position and a full left turning position or a right turning range between said straight traveling position and a full right turning position, said steering operation device being operatively connected to said hydraulic pump so as to steplessly increase output rotational speed of said hydraulic motor transmission during the shift of said steering operation device in either said left or right turning range from said straight traveling position toward said full left or right turning position, wherein the increase of output rotation speed of said hydraulic motor is gradual at an early period of the shift of said steering operation device from said straight traveling position to said full left or right turning position, wherein the increase of output rotation speed of said hydraulic motor is steep at a late period of the shift of said steering operation device from said straight traveling position to said full left or right turning position, and wherein said reversing operation device is also operatively connected to said hydraulic motor so as to switch an output rotational direction of said hydraulic motor between opposite directions.

20. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as set forth in claim 19, wherein said reversing operation device is pedal.

21. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as set forth in claim 19, wherein said reversing operation device is a handle.

22. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for driving and steering a vehicle comprising:

a first hydrostatic transmission drivingly interposed between a prime mover and a pair of left and right drive wheels so as to drive said pair of left and right drive wheels in the same direction, said first hydrostatic transmission including a first hydraulic pump and a variable displacement first hydraulic motor fluidly connected to each other;

a reversing operation device operatively connected to said first hydraulic motor so as to switch an output rotational direction of said first hydraulic motor between opposite directions, thereby setting either a forward or a backward driving direction of said pair of left and right drive wheels;

a second hydrostatic transmission drivingly interposed between said prime mover and said pair of left and right drive wheels so as to differentially drive said pair of left and right drive wheels, said second hydrostatic transmission including a variable displacement second hydraulic pump and variable displacement second hydraulic motor fluidly connected to each other; and

a steering operation device which is shiftable in either a left turning range between a straight traveling position and a full left turning position or a right turning range between said straight traveling position and a full right turning position, said steering operation device being operatively connected to said second hydraulic pump so as to steplessly increase output rotational speed of said second hydraulic motor transmission during the shift of said steering operation device in either said left or right

turning range from said straight traveling position toward said full left or right turning position, wherein the increase of output rotation speed of said hydraulic motor is gradual at an early period of the shift of said steering operation device from said straight traveling position to said full left or right turning position, wherein the increase of output rotation speed of said hydraulic motor is steep at a late period of the shift of said steering operation device from said straight traveling position to said full left or right turning position, and wherein said reversing operation device is also operatively connected to said second hydraulic motor so as to switch an output rotational direction of said second hydraulic motor between opposite directions.

23. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as set forth in claim 22, wherein said reversing operation device is a handle.

24. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as set forth in claim 22, said first hydraulic pump being variable in displacement, further comprising:
a speed change operation device operatively connected to said first hydraulic pump so as to steplessly increase output rotational speed of said first hydraulic motor, thereby driving said pair of left and right drive wheels at various speeds in the same direction.

25. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as set forth in claim 24, wherein said speed change operation device is a pedal, which is depressed for acceleration in one direction whether said vehicle travels forward or backward.